

Case 3255***Macropodus concolor* Ahl, 1937 (Osteichthyes, Perciformes): proposed conservation of the specific name**

Ingo Schindler

Warthestr. 53a, 12051 Berlin, Germany (e-mail: ingoschindler@web.de)

Wolfgang Staeck

Auf dem Grat 41a, 14195 Berlin, Germany

Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code, is to conserve the specific name of *Macropodus concolor* Ahl, 1937, which has consistently been used for the Black Paradise Fish (family OSPHRONEMIDAE), a well known freshwater fish from Southeast Asia. The name is threatened by the senior objective synonym *Macropodus spechti* Schreitmüller, 1936 for which suppression is proposed.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; OSPHRONEMIDAE; *Macropodus concolor*: Black Paradise Fish; Southeast Asia.

1. In July 1936 the aquarist and fish hobbyist W. Schreitmüller gave two specimens of a new species of Paradise Fish (genus *Macropodus* Lacepède) to E. Ahl for determination and description. A few months later (October) on his own initiative, Schreitmüller introduced the name *Macropodus opercularis* Linnaeus var. *spechti* (a subspecific name under Article 45.6.4) for this fish with an illustration and general description in which he did not mention any particular specimens (Schreitmüller, 1936a, p. 181). In November Schreitmüller (1936b, p. 501) used the name *Macropodus opercularis concolor* Ahl with reference to Ahl's forthcoming description, which was already in print at that time. Schreitmüller (1936b, p. 501) requested that *Macropodus opercularis* var. *spechti* should be treated as a synonym of *Macropodus opercularis concolor* Ahl and explained that he did not want to anticipate the scientific decision: 'Da ich der Wissenschaft nicht vorgreifen will, bitte ich, nunmehr den . . . Namen '*M. opercularis spechti* Schreitm. 1936' als Synonym zu führen'. Although Schreitmüller's action had no significance with respect to the Principle of Priority the name *Macropodus opercularis* var. *spechti* has been virtually forgotten.

2. Ahl's description of the new fish, under the name *Macropodus opercularis concolor*, was published in February 1937 (Ahl, 1937, p. 117). Two syntypes were deposited in the Zoologisches Museum Berlin: a lectotype ZMB 31380 was designated by Paepke (1994, p. 75). Since that time *Macropodus opercularis concolor* and *Macropodus concolor* (after recognition of the species rank by Vierke, 1978b, p. 76) have both been used as the name for the Black Paradise Fish in scientific and popular works (see Schwier, 1939; Vadasz et al., 1978; Vierke, 1978a; Paepke, 1992, 1994; Freyhof & Herder, 2002; an additional 28 references are held by the Commission Secretariat).

3. Freyhof & Herder (2002, p. 156) used the name *Macropodus spechti* for the Black Paradise Fish. They stated that the name *M. spechti* was not a nomen oblitum as it had not been rejected as such between 1961 and 1973 (Article 23.12) and it was

therefore available. Accordingly, Freyhof & Herder (2002, p. 160) reasoned that 'Ahl's material of *M. concolor* is part of the material referred to by Schreitmüller (1936a)' and designated the lectotype of *M. opercularis concolor* Ahl (see para. 2 above) as the lectotype of *M. opercularis* var. *spechti* Schreitmüller, 1936, making the names objective synonyms (Freyhof & Herder, 2002, p. 160). Until the action by Freyhof & Herder the senior name was effectively forgotten. Considering that Schreitmüller (1936b) indicated that the name *spechti* Schreitmüller, 1936 be recognized as a synonym of the then unpublished name *concolor* Ahl, 1937 it seems appropriate to follow Recommendation 23A and refer this case to the Commission for a ruling.

4. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the subspecific name *spechti* Schreitmüller, 1936, as published in the trinomen *Macropodus opercularis spechti*, for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *concolor* Ahl, 1937, as published in the trinomen *Macropodus opercularis concolor*;
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *spechti* Schreitmüller, 1936, as published in the trinomen *Macropodus opercularis spechti* and as suppressed in (1) above.

References

- Ahl, E. 1937. Neue Süßwasserfische aus dem Indischen und Malaischen Gebiet. *Zoologischer Anzeiger*, **117**(5/6): 113–119.
- Freyhof, J. & Herder, F. 2002. Review of the paradise fishes of the genus *Macropodus* in Vietnam, with description of two new species from Vietnam and southern China. *Ichthyological Exploration of Freshwaters*, **13**(2): 147–167.
- Paepke, H.-J. 1992. The recognition of *Macropodus concolor* Ahl, 1937. *Labyrinth*, **12**(3): 1–5.
- Paepke, H.-J. 1994. *Paradiesfische, die Gattung Macropodus*. Die Neue Brehm-Bücherei Nr. 616. 144 pp. Westarp Wissenschaft, Magdeburg.
- Schreitmüller, W. 1936a. Ein neuer Makropode (?) *Macropodus opercularis* L. var. *spechti* Schreitm. (Netz- oder Gitterparadiesfisch). *Das Aquarium*, **10**: 181–182.
- Schreitmüller, W. 1936b. Neu- und Wiedereinführungen. *Nachrichtenblatt für Aquarien- und Terrarienvereine*, Nr. **35**: 501.
- Schwier, H. 1939. Geschlechterbestimmung und -differenzierung bei *Macropodus opercularis*, *concolor*, *chinensis* und anderen Artbastarden. *Zeitschrift für induktive Abstammungs- und Vererbungslehre*, **77**: 291–335.
- Vadasz, C.S., Kiss, B. & Csányi, V. 1978. Defensive behaviour and its inheritance in the anabantoid fish, *Macropodus opercularis* and *Macropodus opercularis concolor*. *Behaviour Processes*, **3**: 107–124.
- Vierke, J. 1978a. Der Schwarze Makropode. *Aquarien Magazin*, **12**(2): 76–81.
- Vierke, J. 1978b. *Labyrinthfische und verwandte Arten*. 232 pp. Engelbert Pfriem-Verlag, Wuppertal-Elberfeld.

Acknowledgement of receipt of this application was published in BZN **59**: 223.

Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., c/o The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: iczn@nhm.ac.uk).